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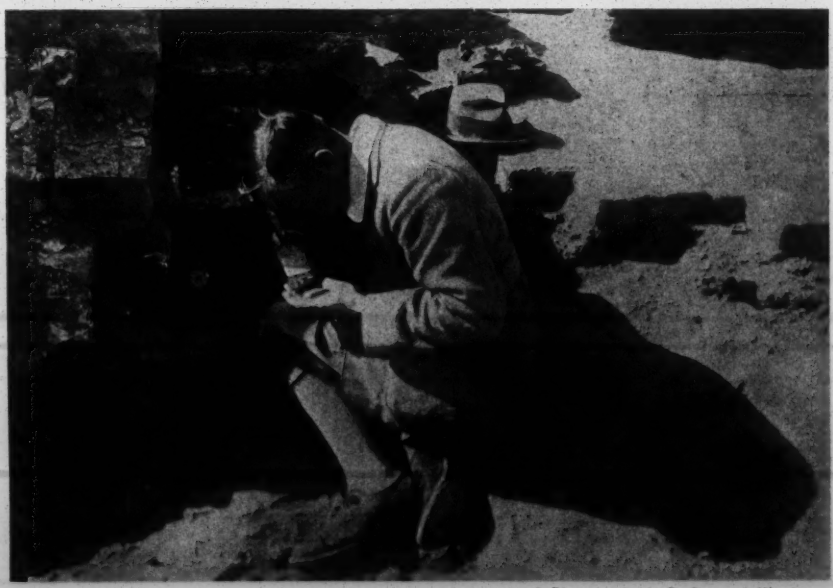

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AN ARCHEOLOGIST BRUSHING OFF THE DUST OF 5,000 YEARS FROM AN INSCRIBED TABLET FOUND IN UR

(See Bulletins Nos. 3 and 4)

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

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Expedition Will Attempt To Climb One of Himalaya's Giants

AN EXPEDITION has been organized to climb Kinchinjunga, a neighbor to Mt. Everest. Last year Kinchinjunga turned back a party of six Germans who attempted to scale its glistening sides.

Kinchinjunga, in Sikkim, lies only 100 miles east of Everest, which towers over the border between Tibet and Nepal.

Kinchinjunga the Mt. Rainier of Darjeeling Colony

If Everest lost 1,000 feet of its summit in a rock slip, Kinchinjunga, rising 28,146 feet in height, five and one-third miles up in the air, would be as high as Mt. Everest.

The present rival of Everest has three names, Godwin-Austen or K2 or Dapsang, and is a member of the same Himalayan Mountain chain, but it lies far to the other end of the range in Kashmir. It is as far away from Everest and Kinchinjunga as Chicago is from New York. K2 tops Kinchinjunga by only 104 feet.

Of the three, Kinchinjunga is most accessible. It is to the English health colony, Darjeeling, what Mt. Rainier is to Tacoma and Seattle. The narrow gauge railway from the plains of India to Darjeeling brings visitors within 45 miles of the snow-capped peak holding court amid a group of peaks, many of which outtop McKinley, highest mountain in North America.

Kinchinjunga is particularly impressive to the visitor in Darjeeling because of the tremendous vertical sweep possible to the eye. K2 and Everest rise from high plateaus; not so Kinchinjunga.

The Eye Travels 27,000 Feet from Gorge to Peak

Standing on the Darjeeling ridge the observer first looks down, deep down 6,000 feet, into a river gorge choked with tropical jungle. Then his eyes rise to the rice fields, reflecting the blue sky and the tea plantations. Up and up to the Temperate Zone trees, then to the pine forests crowning lower mountains. He peeps over half a dozen intervening ridges into the dark mysterious depths of purple valleys. Then he sees the bare uplands above the tree line and finally the crystal white summit. Long white glaciers drape the mountain mass whose two-pronged peak half fills the sky.

At Darjeeling the world seems to be walled on the north. The eye travels 27,000 vertical feet from the bottom of the gorges up to the peak. There is no such thing as a horizon; Kinchinjunga closes the view like an exquisite screen.

The vertical height is to the distance from the Darjeeling observation point, as 1 is to 8; that is, as a tree 60 feet high appears when viewed at the distance of one average city block.

Some American Comparisons to Kinchinjunga View

In terms of familiar American views, Kinchinjunga, seen from Darjeeling, is like the Washington Monument as it appears from the west veranda of the Capitol or the Woolworth Building as seen from the Jersey shore.

Although Kinchinjunga is so close to an outpost of civilization it has defied

© *Publishers' Photo Service*

A FACE OF RUSHMORE MOUNTAIN: LIKE PAPER CRUMPLED BY THE HAND OF NATURE

On one of the surfaces of this huge cliff will be carved gigantic figures of four famous builders of the American Nation: Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln and Roosevelt. The figures will be 200 feet high and in full relief (See Bulletin No. 3).

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The Viking House That Iceland Rebuilt

ONE of the sights which the commission appointed by President Hoover to represent the United States in Iceland at the 1,000th anniversary of her legislature will probably see will be a real Viking house.

A Viking's house that was burned 819 years ago in Iceland has been reconstructed.

The new house duplicates, as nearly as possible, the historic home of one of Iceland's greatest lawyers.

Rebuilt Viking House Like First White Dwelling in America

Njal was a lawyer learned in the voluminous and technical law of Viking Iceland in the years before the English jury system was brought to England by William the Conqueror on the end of a Norman spear.

Iceland has rebuilt Njal's home because the fame of his legal skill, together with the story of his death amid melodramatic scenes, has been preserved in one of the most cherished of Iceland's sagas, "The Story of Burnt Njal." The saga came into being 11 years after Leif Ericson's journey from Greenland to American shores, which was in the year 1,000 A.D.

Njal's reconstructed house is especially interesting to Americans because it is similar to the house reputed to have been the first built by white men in America. Thorfinn Karlsefin, the colonist, who followed Leif Ericson, is believed to have built a Viking house somewhere on the shores now known as New England or Nova Scotia. Njal's rebuilt house has a floor plan not unlike that of Leif's own house, the ruins of which may still be seen in Iceland.

In Spring the Viking Lived under a Flower-Covered Roof

The appearance of many Viking houses resembled a street of modern row houses in eastern United States and seaboard cities. The triangular Viking gable ends ranging in a line suggested a series of cottages shoulder to shoulder, but each Viking gable roof usually sheltered a single room. The whole sprawling Viking house of many gables was connected by a narrow hall that linked the rooms in the same way that covered passages link up the many buildings of a New England farmhouse.

Turf often roofed the Viking's house and in spring he lived beneath a carpet of wild flowers.

Leading men of the island, such as Njal, usually had one high-roofed, large hall in their houses. This hall had three divisions lengthwise; a nave and two low side aisles separated by low stone walls. The high roof of the nave was supported by two lines of wooden pillars brought over stormy seas from Norway in the small Viking ships. This hall was a sleeping, eating and living room for the chief and his retainers. Some of these halls, which served as eating, living and sleeping rooms, were very large. One in Iceland was 200 feet long and 60 feet wide.

A Sleeper Locked Himself in Bed

Down the center of the hall was one long fireplace. The smoke from the fire found its way out through holes cut high up in the roof. Benches for the family, servants and retainers ran along each side of the long fireplace. In the low-roofed

all attempts to scale it. Reconnaissance explorations around its base reveal very few advantageous ridges up which mountaineers can ascend.

Natives of the region, Bhutias, Lepchas and Nepalese, believe the snow peaks to be the abode of the evil spirits. High up the sides of the mountains they build monasteries in which they pray for deliverance from the evil spirits. They think that to climb the peaks is to tempt death.

Bulletin No. 1, April 28, 1930.

© Photograph by Junius B. Wood

ONE OF THE GROANING AUTOMATIC IRRIGATION WHEELS OF THE EUPHRATES

Near Hit these water-wheels stand in openings between stone piers 35 feet high and receive the full force of the current. As the wheel revolves, the earthen vessels, bound to the rim, spill the water into the conduits, whence it is carried to the gardens (see Bulletin No. 4).

School Service Department,
National Geographic Society,
Washington, D. C.

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History Written on Mountains

FORMER President Coolidge has been asked to write a brief history of the United States to be engraved beneath the gigantic figures of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln and Roosevelt which are being carved on the face of Mt. Rushmore in South Dakota.*

Darius, King of the Persians, and Mr. Coolidge's predecessor in mountain inscribing by the margin of nearly 2,500 years, used 5,000 words for a history of his empire.

To the Mt. Rushmore history there has been assigned 9,600 square feet, the area of a city lot 120 by 80 feet; Darius was cramped in about 800 square feet and was compelled to use a part of the space for translations into two other languages.

Three Historic Mountain Memorials

Darius' inscriptions at Behistun; the rock records of conquerors from Rameses II down to the French in 1860 at the Nahr el-Kelb, Syria; and the Lion of Luzern, Switzerland, are three notable mountain memorials.

Mountains are the oldest tablet man ever tried to write upon. But his very oldest "writings" are inside, not outside, of mountains. With pictures of the elk, mammoth, and many strange beasts painted on the sides of subterranean chambers in northern Spain prehistoric cavemen told their story 50,000 years ago.

The famous cliffs of Nahr el-Kelb (Dog River), just north of Beyrouth, have served for 3,000 years as a guest book for visiting invaders.

Names of conquerors and their remarks cover the rock like autographs and verses fill the pages of an old album. The "parade" of generals supplies a brief and significant history of Palestine and Syria, which have always formed a bridge for marching hosts:

Rameses II, King of Egypt, 1230 B. C.; Shalmaneser, King of Assyria, 860 B. C.; Tiglath-Pileser, King of Assyria, 727 B. C.; Sennacherib, King of Babylonia, 681 B. C.; Esarhaddon, King of Assyria, 668 B. C.; Germanicus, representative of Marcus Aurelius, Emperor of Rome, 161 A. D.; Selim, Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, 1566 A. D.; Emir Beshir, Turkish General, 1828 A. D.; and marshals of France, Expeditionary Force, 1860 A. D.

Rock Writing at Behistun Challenged Scholars for Two Centuries

The Lion of Luzern is a recent memorial and one familiar to tourists. In a niche of native rock lies a dying lion on a spear and shield. Below are carved the names of 26 officers who, with 760 privates, are memorialized as members of the Swiss guard that gave their lives in the defense of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette in the Tuileries at the beginning of the French Revolution.

The comments of Darius about himself, on the mountain of Behistun, overlooking the ancient road from Baghdad to Ecbatana (Hamadan), have acquired an importance quite out of proportion to their text. For two centuries the Behistun inscriptions proved a mystery that challenged scholars. Steps leading to the translation of the writings make one of the best mystery stories of archeology. Final

* "Black Hills, Once Hunting Grounds of the Red Man," *National Geographic Magazine*, September, 1927.

aisles parallel to the long axis of the hall were bunks for sleeping. These bunks usually had swinging doors which locked on the inside so that the sleeper could lock himself in his compartment.

Such a house was burned down over Njal's head. "Lawyer Victim of Gangland Feud," newspapers would have headlined the event, but since there were no newspapers they called it the "Saga of Burnt Njal."

Njal had been too successful in the Iceland courts. He knew Icelandic law so well he could repeat it all from memory. So he, his sons, and his friends and servants were attacked by a rival gang. With spears and battle-axes they beat off the attackers who finally set fire to a haystack which in turn fired the house. Women and children were permitted to go out safely, except Bergthora, Njal's wife, who chose to stay with her husband. Njal, himself, was too old to fight so he and Bergthora lay down together, covered themselves with an ox hide and awaited their fate.

One of the defenders managed to escape amid the smoke and confusion. He brought his enemies to trial, heard them declared outlaws, and finally followed some of them as far south as Wales to kill them for vengeance.

Bulletin No. 2, April 28, 1930.

See also "A Walking Tour Across Iceland," "The Island of the Sagas," *National Geographic Magazine*, April, 1928. In addition on page 471 of this issue appears a picture of the Plain of Thingvellir, where the celebration in honor of the 1,000th anniversary of the establishment of Iceland's congress will be held in July.

© *Photograph by Hans Petersen*

SOME RURAL ICELAND HOMES STILL FOLLOW VIKING STYLES

The buildings shown in the illustration make up a single house. Each gable roofs a separate room. Sod, instead of shingles, keeps the rain out. Iceland has never had any large trees, so the timber for the early houses had to be imported. There is a record of the arrival in Iceland of a boatload of timber from Vinland (America) in the year 1347.

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The Garden of Eden (Iraq) Aspires To Be a Nation

WHEN King Feisal of Iraq and Ibn Saud, ruler of Arabia, recently kissed and made up—yes, literally kissed, according to reports, it was good news for Iraq. To be on good terms with Arabia is as important for the rising young nation of Iraq as it is for North America that peace shall exist between the United States and Canada.

Iraq, present-day heir of ancient Babylon in the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates, has had an up-hill job since the World War, in its efforts to become a modern state. It has had constructive plans for physical development; but politics, religion, and the age-old social customs of some of its people have held it back.

Great Britain Promises to Sponsor Iraq's Bid for Independence

Ever since the Treaty of Versailles placed the country under mandate to Great Britain in 1920, Iraq has won a greater and greater degree of independence. It is the only one of the twelve mandated territories which has a king, parliament, and responsible government. As a result of Iraqi insistence, the relations between mandatory (Great Britain) and mandated territory were defined in 1922 in a treaty between the government of Iraq and Great Britain which looked toward ending the mandate when Iraq could enter the League of Nations. This treaty has since been revised twice with Great Britain undertaking more specifically to use her influence to obtain membership for Iraq in the League if Iraq continues to make progress. Within the last few months Great Britain has agreed to drop this proviso and to seek League membership for Iraq unconditionally in 1932.

Great Britain now has both a civil and a military place in Iraqan affairs. A British High Commissioner resides in Baghdad and advises the king on international and financial matters. A British air force is maintained in the country under the command of an Air Vice-Marshal. British military officers are training the Iraq army, and a number of British governmental experts are employed in the various civil offices of the Iraq government.

Try To Revive Irrigation System That Made Babylonia Rich

Embracing the fertile valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates and large stretches of semi-arid and desert lands, Iraq has always been given over to farming and stock raising. In Babylonian and Grecian days the valleys were gridroned with irrigation canals and these were kept up by the Arabs in the days of the Caliphate. The lands of Iraq were exceedingly productive and its people were highly prosperous until 1258 A. D. when the Mongol invasion destroyed the irrigation embankments. Afterwards under Turkish rule Iraq became less and less prosperous, much of its once fertile valleys turned back into wilderness and malaria-breeding swamps.

The aim of the most thoughtful leaders in Iraq is to restore the irrigation works which the valleys possessed during their golden age. This, however, would be a tremendous task, requiring vast amounts of capital, which Iraq at present cannot get. The government has organized a Department of Irrigation and under its supervision is slowly bettering existing irrigation works and undertaking new ones. One of the most important steps has been the construction of a permanent weir in the bed of the River Dijala to replace earthen dams which had to be reconstructed annually, since they washed away each flood season. In 1928 canals

success in reading the cuneiform sentences gave the key to the whole literature of Babylonia. What the Rosetta stone did to reveal the puzzle of Egyptian hieroglyphics, the Darius inscription did for cuneiform writing.

Cuneiform writing is a shorthand style made up of arrow-shaped marks.

Copies of the mysterious Behistun "broadside" were brought to Europe by Pietro della Valle, 300 years ago. Generations of scholars puzzled over pages of impressions not unlike hen tracks. One man deciphered eleven signs, another added knowledge of seven more. Still there were not enough until Rawlinson, an English army officer, working independently, went to Behistun on leave. He copied much of the text, working on a ledge 18 inches wide. A misstep would have sent him rolling down the 500-foot precipice.

What Darius Had To Say to the World

Rawlinson, laboring alone, solved the great cuneiform puzzle and translated Darius' 5,000-word, mountain-engraved history which begins:

"I am Darius, the great king, the king of kings, the King of Persia, the king of the provinces," and so on, at considerable length.

Much of Darius' message is devoted to his record in putting down revolts in various provinces. Nine revolt leaders are sculptured in the rock above the legend, with ropes around their necks. The entire text is a Gargantuan boast of a primitive tyrant whose human weaknesses peep out only once or twice.

"There is also much else," proclaims Darius with sudden modesty, "that hath been done by me which is not graven in this inscription; on this account it hath not been inscribed lest he who shall read this inscription hereafter should then hold that which hath been done by me to be too much and should not believe it, but should take it to be lies."

Bulletin No. 3, April 28, 1930.

© *Photograph from Rise Studios*

WILD DEER IN SOUTH DAKOTA'S STATE GAME PARK

An area near the State Game Lodge, occupied by President Coolidge, was turned over to the State by Congress as the Custer State Park Game Sanctuary.

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Flying the Graf Zeppelin Over Unknown Siberia

GEOGRAPHY of little known areas of Siberia, observed on his flight around the world, was described by Dr. Hugo Eckener when he came to Washington to receive the Special Gold Medal of the National Geographic Society.

"It had been my original intention to perform the flight over Russia and Siberia along a so-called great circle-route, thus avoiding the mountainous parts of southern Siberia which during the month of August are nearly constantly covered by heavy raincloud and fog," Dr. Eckener said. "This great circle-route would have led us further to the north by the mouths of the rivers Ob and Yenisei and along the northern and middle section of the River Lena.

"On the way, when our ship was over central Russia, I received weather reports, announcing a wide-spread area of bad weather in the northeast corner of Russia which made it appear likely that the Ural range in its northern parts would be covered with rain-clouds. We would then have been compelled to cross the mountains at a considerable height, so as to avoid stranding on the high mountains.

Over an Uninhabited Swamp for 900 Miles

"To fly at such an altitude would not have been feasible in the beginning of our trip with the ship heavily loaded. Thus, I was forced to pass over the Middle-Ural and to run a more southerly course between the sixtieth and sixty-fifth parallels. Perhaps this change in course, from a geographical point of view, was no disadvantage because we thus passed districts which were highly interesting and impressive and which gave a fantastic picture of a nearly inaccessible region.

"Immediately after passing the Ural range we got over the swamp district of the so-called Taiga, which stretches widely along both banks of the River Ob. We crossed these swamps over a course of 800 to 900 miles. In this terrible district it is impossible for human beings to live. Wherever the eye looks it meets with wastes of green and gray swamps which would retain with deadly arms a wanderer and would not again release its prey.

"Having passed the River Yenisei we then crossed a desolate and deserted hilly country, following generally the course of the Lower Tunguska. From the vast virgin forests below us and from the deeply cut narrow river valleys which we passed no hand waved up to us. Only occasionally daring hunters may invade these regions when they are temporarily freed from the ties of a fierce winter for a short summer of two or three monthly only. To the south and to the north there are mountain ranges which are hardly known and not entered on the maps in detail.

Found Mountains Far Higher Than Shown on Maps

"The watershed between the Rivers Yenisei and Lena proved to be a table land, slowly inclining towards the Lena, deserted and bare, not inhabited by men, a vast space of detached isolation. But then, having passed Yakutsk, the most interesting and, as to landscape, the most fascinating part of the Siberian course began. We had to pass over the range of the Stanovoi Mountains which separate the Lena district from the Okhotsk Sea. To this part of the journey I had from

were extended to revive areas that were passing out of cultivation and to bring tens of thousands of acres of new land under irrigation.

Two phases of irrigation unknown in Iraq in past centuries are being developed by exploration of possible artesian water supplies from wells, and by the installation of power pumps to lift water from streams to land too high to be reached by present canals. The latter development has been encouraged by the government by the admission of gas engines duty free, and by arrangements with oil producing companies assuring cheap fuel.

In transportation agencies, other than railways, Iraq has made a marked advance in recent years. The natural outlet for the country is southeastward along its rivers to the Persian Gulf. But its customers and clients are chiefly to the northwestward and the northeastward across extensive deserts and mountain ranges. These barriers have not yet been bridged by steel rails. Gaps still exist in the famous proposed "Berlin-to-Baghdad" railway so that it is not even possible to move Iraqan products as far as the eastern Mediterranean ports by rail. There are nearly one thousand miles of railway track in Iraq, but it is entirely an internal system. At no point does a railway cross the Iraq border. The rail system, however, does perform two important functions in international trade. It carries exports and imports to and from the port of Basra, head of navigation on the Shatt-al-Arab for ocean-going ships; and it connects at Khanaqin near the Persian border with a motor road over which goes Iraq's transit trade with Persia.

Half-Way House in the Desert for Automobiles and Airplanes

Good, hard-surfaced highways have been constructed through long sections of the river valleys. Across the deserts that separate Iraq and Syria the highways are merely natural earth roads, but they are in fair condition, and over them powerful, American-built busses carrying passengers, mail and express cover 600 miles in 24 hours. The quickest mails, however, travel by the weekly airplane service which extends from Basra to Cairo. Airplanes fly approximately over the highway route for a considerable part of the way between Baghdad and the west. At the half-way point, Rutbah Wells, the Iraq government has established a station which is used for refueling and rewatering by both planes and automobiles, and there a desert police force of considerable strength is maintained. At this station a restaurant is conducted, and even over-night accommodations are provided for travelers.

Of the two great rivers of Iraq, only the Tigris can be used by boats. An important freight service, moving hundreds of thousands of tons in large river steamers, is operated between Baghdad and Basra. Special shallow-draft, stern-wheel river boats ply the Tigris up the river from Baghdad to Mosul; and above the latter city considerable quantities of supplies are brought down-stream on rafts. Below the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates the combined tidal stream is known as the Shatt-al-Arab. The commerce on the Shatt-al-Arab has been greatly facilitated and increased since the World War by the deeper and deeper dredging of the bar at the river's mouth. Ships of 20-foot draft can now cross the bar at low water and ships of 30-foot draft at high water.

Although some progress has been made in recent years toward the development of industry and the extraction of mineral wealth from the ground, Iraq is still predominantly a farming and stock raising country. Dates, valued at close to six million dollars, led the list of exports, followed by cereals and flour, five millions; and wool, two and a half millions.

Iraq's few industries are poorly developed. The natives maintain factories for spinning, knitting, carpet-making, and shoe manufacture, copper-smelting and flour milling.

See also in the *National Geographic Magazine* "Where Adam and Eve Lived," December, 1914; "The Cradle of Civilization," February, 1916; "Pushing Back History's Horizon," February, 1916; "Archeology, the Mirror of the Ages," August, 1928; "New Light on Ancient Ur," January, 1930.

the beginning been looking forward with the greatest interest because the formation and height of these mountains was entirely unknown to us.

"In geographic manuals there was hardly to be found a hint thereof. Therefore, if the mountains were covered by clouds we would have to pass them at a high altitude. But what altitude would be necessary?

The Most Beautiful Part of the Flight

"The handbooks say that in the district in which we intended to pass, the mountains were hardly 4,000 feet high. But we were obliged to climb constantly the nearer we came to the coast. We went up from 3,000 feet to 4,000 feet and then to 5,000 feet, but still the ridges and peaks were higher than we flew. Finally we worked our way through at a height of nearly 6,000 feet, following a deeply cut valley and crossing a ridge at only 300 feet altitude over the ground.

"The peaks to the right and to the left I estimated to be still 800 to 900 feet higher. After having surmounted this last ridge we found the mountains dropped very steeply towards the ocean. It was a grand and nerve-straining flight through fantastic unknown mountain regions, perhaps the most beautiful part of our whole world flight."

Dr. Grosvenor Presents Medal

Dr. Gilbert Grosvenor, president of the National Geographic Society, presented the medal to Dr. Eckener in the presence of a distinguished gathering representing nearly every State in the United States and 36 foreign countries.

Dr. Grosvenor said, in part:

"This noteworthy gathering is representative of the 1,285,944 members of the National Geographic Society, residing in 122 mainland countries, and 55 islands and groups of islands.

"Dr. Eckener flew across three continents. Geographic members from seven continents acclaim his achievement—seven continents that is, by including Antarctica, where until recently we had a very famous visiting member, who has sent Dr. Eckener his personal congratulations by wireless. I refer to Rear Admiral Richard E. Byrd.

"It is in the name of this world membership that your Board of Trustees have authorized me to bestow upon Dr. Eckener the National Geographic Society's Special Gold Medal to commemorate the great contributions to geographic knowledge made by his air cruise around the world. One side of this medal bears the seal of the National Geographic Society, which seal has appeared on the only ten other medals The Society has awarded in its 42 years of existence.

How Aviation Has Served Geography

"Thus we inscribe Dr. Eckener's name on a memorable roll of modern immortals in geography and exploration, a roll illuminated by the names of Peary, Amundsen, Shackleton, Bartlett, Goethals, Stefansson, Gilbert, Bennett, Lindbergh and Byrd. It is interesting to recall that four of the eleven medalists of The Society are associated with aëronautics.

"Aircraft are the instruments of exploration, of aerial mapping, of aerial photography. Photography from the air has added new, dramatic opportunities for portraying Nature's scenes, landscapes and human structures in the language which so often is the native tongue of geography—the photograph.

"We honor Dr. Eckener tonight for the years of experiment, inventive genius, and patient research which culminated in his astounding achievement. The whole world held its breath till his flight was finished. Along the path of the great ship millions waited hoping to glimpse it as it flew over. His remarkable voyage illustrates his unusual organizing and executive ability, and his mastery of the science of aëronautics acquired by hard laboratory study and by more than 3,000 air journeys."